

My Name is Jayne Lux

I live in Frenchtown and work in Missoula. I am a 4th generation Montanan and have worked as a nurse since 1980.

I have seen services in the homes of people with physical and mental illnesses improve since the 1980's. I think that we still have a ways to go with helping people with disabilities to live in the community instead of a nursing home or other institutions.

Listening to Governor's Bullock address on Wed night I was again thinking why return \$400 in a refund when the community services are in need of more funding. Last Legislative session services were decreased by 2% and so were provider rates.

In 1983 Montana started a waiver program for people with physical disabilities and aged, which is overseen by the Long term Care division. The number of people on services in the Missoula Home and Community Based Service that also had a severe mental illness continued to increase. By 2000, 25% of the people had severe mental illnesses that could not get enough services from mental health centers due to also having significant medical concerns (Co-occurring diseases such as diabetes, Parkinson, and COPD). Four years ago the SDMI waiver (severe disabling mental illness) was started as a pilot in Great Falls, Billings and Butte. The program was expanded to Missoula 2 years ago and now being expanded to Helena. All of the areas have waiting lists. With these expanded services 175 people are now living in the community instead of a NH or the state hospital.

As case managers we face many obstacles in maintaining and returning people to the community. The 3 biggest issues are affordable housing, (waiting lists are 3 years long) providers struggle with the Medicaid rate (ex Caregiver agencies, physicians, and transportation due to low rate medicab not willing to do longer rides,)

How people can live with only \$645 to \$710 a month and then to try and figure out all the systems to get the help they need

I know as MONTANANS we can do better at taking care of our neighbors. I understand all the balancing and figuring you have to do during this session.

I would offer to be a resource to any legislator that would like more information about community services since I am a 24 year veteran of trying to get the most out of the medicaid dollars to serve people with disabilities.

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